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High-level dialogue on strengthening international economic cooperation for development through partnership

Report of the Secretary-General**

Summary

The present report is intended to assist the General Assembly in deciding the modalities, the nature and the timing of the next high-level dialogue, taking into account the important role assigned to the dialogue by the Monterrey Consensus, adopted at the International Conference on Financing for Development. As requested by General Assembly resolution 56/190 of 21 December 2001, the views of Member States and the organizations of the United Nations system, as well as the proposals of the Secretary-General are contained herein.

* A/57/150.

** The submission of the present report was delayed in order to reflect the deliberations of the Economic and Social Council during its July substantive session on the Council's role in the follow-up to the International Conference on Financing for Development.

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I. Introduction

1. The idea of renewing the dialogue on strengthening international economic cooperation for development through partnership was launched nine years ago.[1] The first dialogue was held in September 1998, and the second in September 2001, one year after the Millennium Summit.[2] On both occasions, the theme of the dialogue related to various aspects of globalization and its impact and led to the adoption of a resolution on the subject by the General Assembly. The dialogue was built around the idea of participation and organized on the basis of innovative modalities, including round tables and panels, in addition to a plenary debate.

2. The next high-level dialogue of the General Assembly will be held as part of the overall architecture for the follow-up to the International Conference on Financing for Development, which was held in Monterrey, Mexico, from 18-22 March 2002. The Monterrey conference called for a new partnership for development. The conference and its preparatory process featured innovative approaches to reach consensus, which consisted of an open intergovernmental dialogue, strengthened collaboration among the United Nations, the Bretton Woods institutions and the World Trade Organization (WTO), an effective civil society and business sector involvement, and close inter-secretariat cooperation among the major institutional stakeholders. Thus, considerable similarities already seem to exist between the approach and modalities used in the Monterrey process and the previous high-level dialogues in the General Assembly.

3. The Monterrey Consensus stated that the high-level dialogue should serve as the intergovernmental focal point for the general follow-up to the International Conference on Financing for Development and related issues and would consider the financing for development-related reports coming from the Economic and Social Council and other bodies, as well as other financing for development-related issues. The high-level dialogue would include a policy dialogue, with the participation of the relevant stakeholders, on the implementation of the results of the Conference, including the theme of coherence and consistency of the international monetary, financial and trading systems in support of development. Appropriate modalities to enable participation in the reconstituted high-level dialogue by all relevant stakeholders, as necessary, would be considered.[3]

4. As part of the follow-up mechanism, the Monterrey Consensus also gave an important role to the Economic and Social Council in staying engaged in the implementation. The Council, at its substantive session of 2002, affirmed its readiness to report to the General Assembly and to provide inputs to the biennial General Assembly high-level dialogue on strengthening international cooperation for development through partnership on all efforts made by the Council in support of the Monterrey process, including the results of the annual spring meeting of the Council, the Bretton Woods institutions and WTO.[4]

5. The General Assembly will have to decide on the nature, timing and modalities of the next high-level dialogue, taking into account the need to reconstitute it as the intergovernmental focal point for the follow-up to Monterrey. The Assembly may also wish to consider how best the follow-up to Monterrey could be addressed in relation to the integrated follow-up to United Nations conferences and summits.

6. To assist the General Assembly in its deliberations, the present report responds both to the mandate given in the Monterrey Consensus and in General Assembly resolution 56/190 of 21 December 2001, in which the Assembly requested the Secretary-General, in close consultation with Governments, all relevant partners of the United Nations system and other relevant stakeholders, to propose modalities, the nature and the timing of the dialogue and genuine partnership for the promotion of international economic cooperation for development for consideration at its fifty-seventh session.

7. As requested by resolution 56/190, the Secretary-General, in his note verbale dated 30 April 2002, solicited the views of Member States regarding modalities, the nature and the timing of the dialogue. The organizations of the United Nations system were also asked to provide their views. The views contained in the replies from 11 Governments/groups of countries and 10 organizations of the United Nations system are summarized below.[5]

II. Views of Member States[6]

8. The European Union underlined that everything affecting the follow-up to the International Conference on Financing for Development must be considered in a broad, holistic and all-encompassing approach, and in relation to the follow-up to other conferences and declarations and, particularly, in relation to the follow-up to the World Summit on Sustainable Development and the Millennium Declaration. Moreover, the European Union supported the reconstitution of the high-level dialogue to become the intergovernmental focal point for the general follow-up to the International Conference on Financing for Development and other related issues, bringing together and possibly examining efforts of the different stakeholders at the national, regional and international levels. The European Union emphasized the importance of the United Nations Secretary-General's contribution of ideas in his report on how to allow for the participation of all stakeholders in the high-level dialogue meetings at the General Assembly and its preparation. The European Union stressed the need to seek an innovative solution to the participation of all institutional stakeholders in the high-level dialogue at the General Assembly, including the Bretton Woods institutions, WTO, civil society, non-governmental organizations (NGOs) and the business sector.

9. With regard to timing, the European Union indicated that the next high-level dialogue should take place in 2003. The European Union also pointed out that in order for the General Assembly dialogue to become the focal point along the modalities suggested above, it should be properly prepared. Given the time constraints of the high-level dialogue, the European Union believed that a president's summary, to be presented at the closure of the event, would be, as in the previous dialogues, the most appropriate outcome. Regarding the modalities for the follow-up to the International Conference on Financing for Development by the Economic and Social Council, the European Union believed that it would be necessary to discuss it over the next few months at meetings of the Council. The European Union also believed that the Council must remain the institution for the integrated and coordinated follow-up to the various summits and conferences, including the Monterrey Conference, channelling the various initiatives required by the follow-up to Monterrey within the United Nations system.

10. Brazil agreed that the high-level dialogue should continue to be held biennially and suggested that whenever the high-level dialogue occurs in a year in which the annual meeting of IMF and the World Bank Group is held in Washington, D.C., the dialogue should be scheduled to take place immediately after the conclusion of the meeting, so as to facilitate and allow for the authorities involved in the meeting to also participate in the dialogue. Brazil suggested that the high-level dialogue should allow for an interactive dialogue involving Governments, United Nations agencies with mandates in the development area, the Bretton Woods institutions and organized sectors of civil society, including representatives of the private sector. Brazil noted that the dialogue should be a forum for the exchange of experiences and the discussion of policies aiming at the implementation of the Monterrey Consensus. In this regard, it would be necessary to consider the Monterrey Consensus in its entirety, in order to preserve the interrelated treatment of the themes that compose it.

11. South Africa suggested that the report of the Secretary-General should take into consideration the modalities for participation that have been applied in the financing for development process, as this ensured the maximum participation of the relevant stakeholders. South Africa suggested that the high-level dialogue should have "terms of reference" and that its outcomes should have a status. While there may not be need for a negotiated document, there should, however, be a mechanism to ensure the monitoring and review of the implementation of the Monterrey Consensus.

12. Poland agreed that the high-level dialogue should continue to be held biennially because such spacing of meetings allows its participants for in-depth analysis and assessment of international cooperation for development as well as current events and challenges influencing social and economic development at global level. Poland stated that the next meeting could be held in the second half of 2003, before or during the fifty-eighth session of the General Assembly. The next meeting, which is to be held after the World Summit on Sustainable Development and earlier conferences in Monterrey and Doha, could be an opportunity to consider trade and financial implications of sustainable development. The thematic areas of this next high-level dialogue could also include questions related to financing of development (in accordance with para. 69

of the Monterrey Consensus) as well as policy coherence from the point of view of development, coordination of activities of international and regional organizations in the area of development cooperation and use of modern technologies for integration of developing countries' economies into the global economy. Poland suggested that the high-level dialogue could include plenary meetings, round tables and informal panel discussions, and considered that the broader participation of the International Monetary Fund (IMF), the World Bank and WTO could contribute to enriching discussion and could facilitate the consideration of the impact of the WTO millennium round on the acceleration of development processes. The participation of development assistance agencies and non-governmental sector involved in the practical implementation of the Millennium development goals would also be advisable.

13. Mexico underlined the importance of assuring that, based on the fruitful experience of the Monterrey Conference and its preparatory process, the high-level dialogue fully carries out its new dual function as an important focal point required to: (a) assure the appropriate follow-up of the agreements and commitments of the conference; and (b) continue building bridges between development, financial and trade organizations and the initiatives taken in these fields within the framework of the holistic agenda of the Conference. When taking into consideration and implementing all elements and support efforts contemplated in the Monterrey Consensus in order to achieve both tasks, it should be ensured that all substantive interactions among regional and multilateral institutions, particularly the high-level dialogue, promote integral action and concrete proposals with a long-term vision.

14. With regard to paragraph 69 (c) of the Monterrey Consensus, which states that "the reports on financing for development presented by the Economic and Social Council and other organs would be evaluated, as well as other related subjects", Mexico pointed out that the challenges of this evaluation and execution were of the competence of all and each one of the participants in the Monterrey process. It was the responsibility of each one of the intergovernmental organs to include in their agenda the follow-up to Monterrey and to prepare working papers and reports for collective review. In this task, the support of the Secretariat of the United Nations was essential, in collaboration with other relevant institutions, according to the new modalities of participation and the relevant coordination decisions that were applied during the preparations of the Conference.

15. Referring to paragraph 69 (c) of the Monterrey Consensus, Mexico pointed out the importance of orienting the political dialogue towards the discussion of "vanguard" political proposals that build on the Monterrey Consensus. To this effect, it was essential to add the leadership of all relevant actors, at the highest level, in the substantive preparations for the dialogue. In particular, it would be most useful to have the active involvement of the President of the General Assembly, the President of the Economic and Social Council, the Secretary-General of the United Nations, the President of the World Bank, the Director-General of the International Monetary Fund, the Director-General of the World Trade Organization and the directors of other relevant regional and international intergovernmental organs. In order to be successful, the high-level dialogue must be all-inclusive. In this sense, the experience of the Conference and its preparatory process, and in particular its rules of procedures, offer an appropriate platform to determine modalities in which all the relevant actors could participate and contribute in the follow-up bridging tasks proposed in the Monterrey Consensus.

16. The Islamic Republic of Iran stressed that the high-level dialogue should not be held in conjunction with or at the sidelines of other meetings and that it should have separate and independent nature and receive due attention as an important and effective dialogue. For the meeting to receive due attention as an important and effective dialogue, the Islamic Republic of Iran suggested that invitations should be extended to relevant ministers to participate in the meeting and that Member States should be requested to establish national coordinating focal institutions, with the participation of their senior officials, to compile national positions on how to follow up the outcome of the Monterrey Conference. The Islamic Republic of Iran noted that the outcome and documents of the joint meeting of the Economic and Social Council with the Bretton Woods institutions and WTO, which was foreseen as an annual follow-up to the Monterrey Consensus, should be submitted to the high-level dialogue. Concrete and tangible guidelines and proposals emanating from the high-level dialogue should be submitted to different financial, monetary,

trade and political institutions, as well as timetables for their implementation.

17. The Islamic Republic of Iran noted that the participation of all member and observer States of the United Nations, the Bretton Woods institutions, WTO and civil society, including NGOs, in the high-level dialogue was necessary. Arrangement should be made to remove any obstacle preventing their participation. The Islamic Republic of Iran suggested that the duration of the session should be increased to four days, two days for senior official meeting and two days for high-level dialogue, and also suggested that the outcome of the meeting, after careful consideration at the expert level, should be presented in the form of a negotiated text for final adoption.

18. Japan believed that the dialogue should be a forum for active discussions among Member States and stakeholders on the implementation of the Monterrey Consensus. Institutional stakeholders, including the World Bank, IMF and WTO, and other stakeholders such as the business sector and civil society should be invited. Japan noted that, to foster vigorous discussions, the outcome of the dialogue should not be a negotiated text but rather a summary. Japan expressed the view that the dialogue should be held after the special high-level meeting of the Economic and Social Council with the Bretton Woods institutions, since reports on that meeting would need to be considered. Japan suggested that the dialogue could take place at the beginning of the session of the Second Committee, in this case, replacing the general debates on macroeconomic issues. Japan believed that the dialogue should be a series of interactive discussions on a specific agenda, which should be agreed on well in advance. Part of the discussion could be devoted to interaction between Member States and institutional and other stakeholders. In preparation, each stakeholder should be requested to submit a short report on the steps it has taken or will take in order to implement the Consensus.

19. Angola shared the view that a continuing dialogue needs to be conducted in response to the imperative solidarity, mutual interests and benefits and genuine interdependence, as stated in General Assembly resolution 56/190. Angola believed that regional bodies and international organizations could play a vital role in making international cooperation effective in facing the challenges of globalization. The actual structure and timing of the high-level dialogue could help strengthen that cooperation. Further coordination with the Economic and Social Council would also be useful.

20. Nauru would join the general consensus, on the understanding that the meeting would continue to be at a high level with the participation of the relevant Monterrey stakeholders. Nauru suggested that a short two- or three-day meeting under the auspices of the General Assembly could be considered, along the lines of the recent General Assembly meeting devoted to information and communication technology and development. Such a meeting could be held annually on or around the anniversary of the Monterrey Conference. Technical input to the meeting would ideally be provided by a working group/experts brought together by the Economic and Social Council.

21. Bhutan stressed the need for the high-level dialogue to be utilized to properly review the successes and failures of the United Nations in fulfilling its Charter responsibilities when it comes to development of developing countries, and those specifically related to the least developed, the landlocked and the small island developing countries. Bhutan suggested that the high-level dialogue should consider further solutions to the problem of poverty and the appropriate policies and actions required. The high-level dialogue should address the important aspects of coherence and consistency of the international monetary, financial and trading systems in support of development and the alleviation of poverty. The high-level dialogue should also address the situation of commitment versus provision of resources to fulfil the international target for official development assistance of 0.7 per cent of gross national product by the countries of the Organisation for Economic Cooperation and Development and provide guidance on how financing of international commitments could be done better. The high-level dialogue should consider the question of other means of financing for development and the maintenance of global public goods.

22. Cuba assigned vital importance to the dialogue to be held between Governments and civil society with a view to promoting international economic cooperation for development. Cuba considered that the private sector can play a positive role in supporting the Organization's efforts to stimulate economic growth and social development and to fight poverty, among other priorities in this area. However, cooperation with the private sector and the resources it provides should

only supplement the resources that the Governments of the developed countries must contribute, in fulfilment of the international commitment to allocate 0.7 per cent of their gross national product to official development assistance. In this context, it was important to reaffirm the leadership role of the United Nations in promoting international economic cooperation for development, especially in monitoring and encouraging fulfilment of commitments connected with international mobilization of development assistance resources. Cuba remained firmly convinced that the target set for official development assistance by the United Nations must not only be attained but increased, owing to the exponential widening of the gap between poor and rich countries. It must take the form of an increase in the resources that the industrialized countries devote to multilateral official assistance, as is the case with the United Nations funds and programmes. Cuba stated that the greatest challenges to be addressed with regard to cooperation for development through partnership included: (a) establishing the objectives of public-private sector partnership in advance, since the private sector's prime motivation of maximizing profits does not necessarily coincide with the priorities set by Governments in their national policies and programmes; (b) the need to create a clear, precise normative framework for the procedures for such cooperation, which must be adopted by the intergovernmental bodies; (c) the importance of establishing formulas that prevent the private sector from imposing conditions on its cooperation; (d) the establishment of clear regulations that ensure transparency and the essential process of accounting by private actors and intergovernmental organs; and (e) the importance of ensuring that the cooperation mechanisms and activities are compatible with the Charter of the United Nations.

23. Cuba also stated that the private sector's contribution must be organized and based on pre-established rules that do not entail usurping the functions and responsibilities of the intergovernmental bodies or undermining the main role of the General Assembly and its intergovernmental and democratic character. Accordingly, Cuba reiterated its intention to oppose any attempt to impose the antidemocratic decision-making processes currently prevailing in international finance and trade on other areas of international cooperation for development.

III. Views of the organizations of the United Nations system

24. The United Nations Development Programme (UNDP) noted that the Millennium development goals should be a way for the United Nations to follow up on the commitments made by developing and developed countries in the context of the Monterrey Consensus. The high-level dialogue could provide an opportunity for the Department of Economic and Social Affairs to report fully on the monitoring and analysis prepared as part of its global monitoring mandate on the Millennium development goals, as well as a chance for the United Nations Development Group to present country reports on the implementation of the goals. The Development Group suggested that the high-level dialogue should benefit from a structured agenda, based on the six areas covered in the Monterrey Consensus, taking one theme every year to develop consensus among the stakeholders of the Monterrey process. UNDP notes that the participation should include the Executive Directors of the World Bank and IMF. Institutional participants should include the Department of Economic and Social Affairs, UNDP, the United Nations Conference on Trade and Development (UNCTAD), the World Bank, IMF and WTO.

25. UNDP suggested that the high-level dialogue could be structured around four days: the first day for the dialogue with the Executive Directors of the Bretton Woods institutions; the second for an exchange of views with civil society organizations; the third for a dialogue with the business sector; and the fourth for the intergovernmental process within the General Assembly, which would benefit from the first three days of dialogue with partners. The highly successful round table structure that has shown great potential both at Monterrey and in the annual session of the Economic and Social Council should be continued.

26. IMF noted that the structure of the high-level dialogue could be better discussed after the views on the spring meeting of the Economic and Social Council with the Bretton Woods institutions and WTO are clarified. It seemed important for the General Assembly event to retain its intended objective as a dialogue. IMF expressed interest in proposals on the appropriate structure of such a dialogue in the light of the provisions governing the General Assembly and on

the form by which an appropriate role could be given to agencies.

27. ILO proposes that the high-level dialogue could be structured around the follow-up to Monterrey, highlighting the issue of coherence and consistency within the multilateral system in support of development. ILO said that the high-level dialogue could be a timely occasion for reviewing progress in negotiations on the Doha agenda, the reform of the international financial architecture, debt relief and poverty reduction strategies and other aspects of governance of the global economy. Depending on the timing, ILO mentioned that some of the results of the work of the World Commission on the Social Dimension of Globalization might be available in time to contribute to the deliberations of the high-level dialogue. ILO supports the innovative format of having Ministerial round tables cum informal panels to complement the formal plenary discussions. ILO suggests that the high-level dialogue could be further strengthened through an effort to ensure a wide mix of ministerial participation in the dialogue, spanning both economic and social portfolios, as well as due recognition of the special role of workers' and employers' organizations among civil society stakeholders.

28. ILO proposed that one of the sub-themes of the high-level dialogue to be taken up in panel discussion, should be "Productive investment and decent work in the global economy". In its view, the essence of the financing for development issue was the need to substantially augment productive investment in most developing countries. This should, in turn, be directed towards maximizing the growth rate of productive and decent jobs, which was the key to poverty reduction and an equitable sharing of the fruits of development. However, achieving this goal was a complex task involving a coherent alignment of the key elements of globalization, such as the proper functioning of the systems relating to financial markets, foreign direct investment and trade. In addition, it was also linked to having a strong social pillar in the architecture of global governance involving, inter alia, the issue of the ILO Declaration on Fundamental Principles and Rights at Work. As such, the topic would be a concrete way of deepening the understanding of a key dimension of the follow-up to the International Conference on Financing for Development.

29. FAO noted that the modalities of the dialogue would depend on the desired outcome. If very concrete outcome was to be obtained, and this seemed desirable, then some form of preparatory work would be required for the negotiations and decisions. If a less concrete outcome was the aim, more free wheeling discussions could be envisaged. However, concrete action rather than more words would seem a political imperative. FAO noted that the nature of the dialogue should aim at sustaining the momentum achieved in Monterrey and should focus on areas requiring further attention, such as innovative forms of financing, policy coherence, especially in trade, aid and debt relief, and how to monitor donor commitments on trade, aid and debt relief in a way commensurate with the monitoring of progress in the achievement of the Millennium development goals. FAO stressed that attention must be given to the dates of relevant intergovernmental meetings (Economic and Social Council, General Assembly, Bretton Woods institutions and WTO) in order to build on their outcomes.

30. The United Nations Industrial Development Organization (UNIDO) suggested that the dialogue should be more interactive, focused and result-oriented, and that the dialogue should be more thematically driven, addressing concrete areas of concern in line with the Millennium development goals. For instance, once in two years one of the United Nations system organizations could take responsibility for arranging such a dialogue in line with its scope of activities and international priorities. The organization should monitor the implementation of the recommendations worked out by the dialogue and finally prepare the report on activities undertaken and results achieved. UNIDO considered a two-year period to be appropriate. UNIDO noted that the framework of the dialogue should be as broad as possible, including Governments, different international organizations, NGOs, academic, scientific and research institutions as well as private sector.

31. The United Nations Environment Programme (UNEP) noted that the same format of the previous dialogues should be followed for the next dialogue, with plenary debate, ministerial round tables and informal panels, to include representatives of civil society. UNEP noted that the nature of the next dialogue could usefully reflect the content of paragraph 69 of the Monterrey Consensus, particularly in terms of follow-up to Monterrey and other conferences, such as

the WTO Ministerial Conference in Doha. For example, it could consider, inter alia, how to most effectively ensure that the work programmes of the different United Nations system agencies, including the World Bank, actively reflect the recommendations of international conferences and past dialogues. It would also be useful to include a round table or panel on the vital role of sustainable management of the environment in achieving development, including poverty reduction (for example, sustainable water use coupled with efficient management generates sustainable revenue flows to help fund infrastructure improvements for poor people). The policy discussion could consider partnership models that focus more on the needs and characteristics of developing countries, such as on increasing the capacity of developing countries to manage key infrastructure services and other environment-based resources. The dialogue could also usefully highlight the cost of developing countries of trade barriers and distortions. UNEP suggested that the most appropriate time for the next dialogue would be after the World Summit on Sustainable Development, so as to reflect its outcome.

32. The Office for Drug Control and Crime Prevention notes that the experience of the Commission on Narcotic Drugs of holding thematic debates introduced by expert panellists had shown this format to be highly successful in motivating a frank and open dialogue through the presentation of different national experiences reflecting conditions in the regions concerned. Panellists representing various perspectives and approaches shared lessons learned at the national level. A different moderator could facilitate each sub-theme of the dialogue's panel discussion and could provide input to the President's summary, which would be presented at the closure of the event. The ministerial round tables provide an opportunity for high-level involvement of ministers with responsibilities in the thematic areas under consideration. The Office mentioned that the importance of alternative development in drug control and economic development in regions affected by the illicit cultivation of narcotic crops should be taken into account within the overall theme. The consideration of the issues mentioned in resolution 45/14, adopted at the forty-fifth session of the Commission on Narcotic Drugs, would be important to the theme of coherence and consistency of the international monetary, financial and trading systems in support of development, in accordance with paragraph 69 of the Monterrey Consensus.

33. The Economic and Social Commission for Asia and the Pacific suggested that the modalities should combine ministerial round tables, including the international and regional development institutions, with more free-ranging discussions in informal panels with the participation of relevant stakeholders such as NGOs. These panel discussions should primarily consist of individuals with practical rather than theoretical knowledge of the issues involved. Within each dialogue and within the overall theme of financing for development, subjects with more topical interest, such as the role of financial markets in the real economy, could be discussed at greater length. The subjects to be discussed in the high-level dialogue should be a mix of long-term development issues and short-term problems. It should also be stressed that for both short- and long-term issues, the nature of the dialogue should seek to arrive at practical policy conclusions and recommendations rather than be used as an opportunity for debating theoretical matters. The Commission suggested that the timing of the dialogue should be at the beginning of the General Assembly session to ensure a high-level representation from the member countries.

34. The Economic Commission for Africa believed that the reconstitution of the high-level dialogue should focus on assessing progress towards implementation, constraints to and recommendations for follow-up. It would be important to ensure that all stakeholders are involved, as was the case in the Monterrey Conference. The Commission suggested that regional meetings of technical experts could be held, possibly in conjunction with regional regular meetings such as meetings of ministers of finance, to assess progress in implementation of Monterrey commitments before the high-level dialogue. The Economic and Social Commission for Western Asia also noted that the follow-up role for the regional commissions should be emphasized at the high-level dialogue.

35. The Economic Commission for Africa suggested that high-level dialogue should focus on the theme of ensuring coherence and consistency of the international monetary, financial and trading systems in support of development and that the format should remain as it had been, consisting of plenary meetings, ministerial round table meetings and informal round tables with the participation of all the key stakeholders. T[illegible]

dialogue should provide for free and interactive sessions free of negotiated texts. The key issues and recommendations should be reported back to the plenary. The high-level dialogue should be held every two years, which would provide for sufficient time for regional consultations. The Commission suggested that a whole session of the next high-level dialogue, or a session every four years to accommodate other issues, could be devoted to the follow-up to Monterrey. the Commission also suggested that the timing should be such that the outcome of the high-level dialogue might feed into the proposed international conference for reviewing implementation of the Monterrey Consensus.

IV. Proposals for the third high-level dialogue

36. Taking into account the views of Member States and the United Nations system, the Secretary-General puts forward the following elements and proposals for the consideration of the General Assembly.

A. Nature

37. As the intergovernmental focal point for the general follow-up of the International Conference on Financing for Development as envisaged in the Monterrey Consensus, **the high-level dialogue should maintain the broad, holistic and all-encompassing approach of the financing for development process in addressing a comprehensive set of national, international and systemic issues relating to financing for development.** The purpose of the high-level dialogue is also to further deepen the understanding of the complex process of globalization and interdependence.

38. The follow-up to the International Conference on Financing for Development is complex and takes place not only during the high-level dialogue but spans many aspects of the work of the United Nations and of the General Assembly itself. The high-level dialogue is an occasion by the General Assembly, at the ministerial level, to take stock and explore new issues. For example, the high-level dialogue could also take into consideration the Assembly's discussion of globalization and interdependence this year, as well as the decisions by the Economic and Social Council on its contribution to the follow-up to the International Conference on Financing for Development and on the integrated follow-up to major United Nations conferences and summits. The Assembly may also wish to consider how the discussions on other agenda items related to financing for development in the Second Committee could be best reflected in the high-level dialogue.

39. Consideration will also need to be given as to how to establish a clear division of labour between the work of the Economic and Social Council, the Bretton Woods institutions and WTO at their spring meeting and the high-level dialogue of the General Assembly on the one hand, and the relationship of the latter with the consideration of the follow-up to financing for development in the Second Committee on the other.

40. Two elements could be kept in view in this regard. First, while the annual meetings of the Economic and Social Council, the Bretton Woods institutions and WTO would need to have an agenda focused on implementation, oriented around one or more specific themes on which the Council would hold a dialogue, primarily with the Bretton Woods institutions and WTO, the biennial high-level dialogue in the General Assembly would review, in a universal setting and in a comprehensive manner, the overall progress and the actions taken by all stakeholders in the follow-up to the Monterrey Consensus on the basis of the annual reports of the Secretary-General, the report of the Council and inputs from other stakeholders.

41. Secondly, while the Secretary-General is mandated to submit an annual report to the General Assembly, which would be considered under the item on financing for development in the Second Committee, the high-level dialogue held in the plenary every two years would be the occasion for the high-level comprehensive review of the International Conference on Financing for Development, with the participation of institutional stakeholders, civil society and the private sector.

42. Thus, as described above, the follow-up to the Monterrey Conference is fairly complex. Furthermore, the broader issues related to globalization still need to be addressed in a dialogue to build new partnership for development cooperation. Therefore, the high-level dialogue should deal with the follow-up to Monterrey and other subjects, as appropriate, within a framework of integrated follow-up to conferences. This would

enable it to also address issues relating to the link between sustainable development and financing and trade and the follow-up to the World Summit on Sustainable Development.

B. Timing

43. In order to maintain its biennial periodicity, **the next high-level dialogue should take place in 2003.** This would be most timely, since it would follow the meeting of the Economic and Social Council with the Bretton Woods institutions and WTO in the spring of 2003, and since financing for development is one of the two special themes to be addressed in the annual report of the Secretary-General on the follow-up to the Millennium Declaration, which is to be submitted to the General Assembly in 2003. **The high-level dialogue could be held, as in the past, at the beginning of the General Assembly session or immediately after the annual fall meeting of IMF and the World Bank held in Washington, D.C., so as to facilitate and allow for the ministers involved in the meeting to participate in the dialogue. The specific dates should be determined well in advance, taking into account the schedule of any relevant intergovernmental meetings. The fifty-eighth session of the General Assembly is scheduled to start on 9 September 2003.**

C. Modalities

44. The modalities should allow the high-level dialogue to make a distinct contribution to fostering approaches and alliances for action that would ensure a dynamic and participatory follow-up and effective implementation by all stakeholders.

45. As requested in the Monterrey Consensus, **the high-level dialogue should include a policy dialogue, with the participation of the relevant stakeholders, on the implementation of the results of the Conference, including the theme of coherence and consistency of the international monetary, financial and trading systems in support of development. Such a high-level dialogue could include ministerial round tables involving all partners, similar to the format used at Monterrey; and/or specific forums devoted to interaction between the Bretton Woods institutions, WTO, the United Nations, the business sector and civil society.**

46. **The high-level dialogue could be held for three days; the first day could be devoted to interactive dialogues/hearings with civil society and the private sector; on the second day, four to six simultaneous round tables could be held, consisting of approximately 50 participants each (including four to six representatives from NGOs, the private sector and civil society, and four to six representatives of United Nations agencies, funds and programmes at each round table); on the third day, a policy dialogue could be held to discuss the issues emerging from the round tables and from the dialogues with civil society and the private sector.**

47. **To allow for proper preparations involving all stakeholders, the General Assembly should decide, at its fifty-seventh session, the timing of the high-level dialogue and the themes that it would address. The themes should reflect the holistic approach to the interconnected national, regional, international and systemic challenges of financing for development.**

48. As suggested in the Monterrey Consensus, **the high-level dialogue should consider financing for development-related reports coming from the Economic and Social Council and other bodies, as well as other financing for development-related issues. This would include the report of the Economic and Social Council covering its spring meeting with the Bretton Woods institutions and WTO and the relevant work of its substantive session, as well as the report of the Secretary-General on the progress achieved in implementing the United Nations Millennium Declaration, to be issued in 2003, which will address financing for development as a special theme. This would also include the annual reports of the Secretary-General on the follow-up efforts to the commitments of the International Conference on Financing for Development, as requested in paragraph 72 of the Monterrey Consensus.**

49. **In addition to the above reports, an issues paper containing an annotated agenda could be submitted prior to the high-level dialogue to assist in organizing the dialogue, taking into account issues emerging from the follow-up work of the Economic and Social Council and other entities.**

50. Appropriate modalities to enable participation in the reconstituted high-level dialogue and its

preparation by all relevant stakeholders need to be considered. **Full participation of the Bretton Woods institutions and WTO should be ensured in the high-level dialogue, including in the preparatory phase. Civil society, including NGOs and the business sector, should be enabled to participate in the high-level dialogue and round tables and should be represented in the ministerial dialogue. Innovative solutions should be sought to ensure the contribution of all institutional stakeholders. In this regard, regional forums with the participation of civil society and the business sector could be organized by the regional commissions in order to prepare inputs to the dialogue. The idea of creating national focal points could be considered to ensure the engagement of all stakeholders, including relevant ministries and government offices.**

51. **Drawing upon the discussions and the president's summary, as has been the practice in previous years, an agreed understanding can be worked out in the Second Committee in the form of a resolution under the item on the follow-up to the International Conference on Financing for Development.**

Notes

[1] General Assembly resolution 48/165.

[2] The summaries of the two previous dialogues can be found in documents A/53/529 and A/56/482.

[3] *Report of the International Conference on Financing for Development, Monterrey, Mexico, 18-22 March 2002* (United Nations publication, Sales No. E.02.11.A.7), chap. I, resolution 1, annex, para. 69 (c) and (d).

[4] Economic and Social Council resolution 2002/34.

[5] The views expressed are direct quotes of the original text submitted by the Governments and the United Nations system organizations.

[6] Listed in order of receipt.